

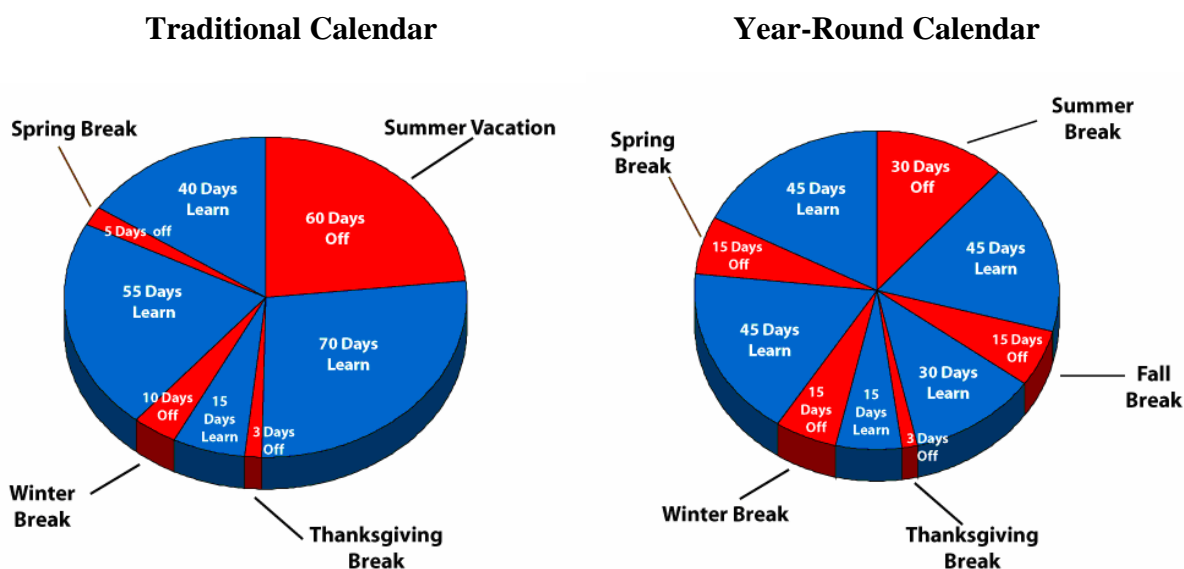
Year-Round Education

This IPRO report explains the different types of year-round education and their advantages and disadvantages to students, parents, and faculty. A comparison of the number of year-round schools in Iowa and other Midwestern states is also provided.

Traditional versus Year Round Calendar

Figure 1 below compares the calendar for a typical traditional 180-day school year and a typical balanced or modified calendar (year-round education) school year. Both charts only include work-days Monday through Friday.

Figure 1¹



Year-Round Education

In a year-round education system, schools reduce the summer break and spread those days throughout the school year, creating shorter, more frequent breaks.

Single Track Year-Round Education²

A single-track year-round calendar has a shorter summer vacation with additional vacation days spread throughout the year into periods called “intercession.” A common type of single-track calendar is 45 days on, 15 days off, 30 days on, 3 days off, 15 days on, 15 days off, 45 days on, 15 days off, 45 days on, and 30 days off.

¹ "NAYRE: Calendars." NAYRE Specialists in Time and Learning. National Association for Year Round Education. <http://www.nayre.org/calendar_comparison.htm>.

² "NAYRE: Typical Calendars." NAYRE Specialists in Time and Learning. National Association for Year Round Education. <<http://www.nayre.org/cal.htm>>.

*Multi-Track Year-Round Education*³

A multi-track year-round system generally follows the same pattern of days on and off as single track year-round system, but teachers and students are assigned different start dates for the pattern. In other words, some teachers and students are in school while others are on vacation. This allows school facilities to accommodate more students. For example, with a four-track year-round calendar, a school with the capacity of 750 students could accommodate 1,000 by only having three tracks of 250 in school at the same time.

Proponents of Year-Round Education⁴

According to the National Association for Year-Round Education (NAYRE), year round education:

- Reduces class sizes and overcrowding in growing school districts if a multi-track year round education systems used
- Provides students the opportunity for tutoring or enrichment services if they are struggling in academics because of more frequent intercessions
- Decreases the amount of review time needed in the classroom because of a more continuous schedule
- Offers students' parents a more continuous childcare service because students would not be out of school for three-months during the summer

Opponents of Year-Round Education

Although proponents contend that shorter breaks increase student achievement, several studies have concluded that there is little if any education benefit to year-round education.⁵ According to opponents, such as the Coalition for a Traditional School Year, year-round education:⁶

- Limits opportunities for students to have non-academic activities or jobs because of shorter breaks.
- Decreases teachers' ability to use summer months to obtain higher degrees and professional development.
- Increases costs (maintenance, air conditioning, etc.) because of year-round classes.
- Creates possible family problems with childcare and parental involvement if children in a family are on different tracks (and schedules) in a multi-track system.

³ Ibid

⁴ "NAYRE: Common Questions." NAYRE Specialists in Time and Learning. National Association for Year Round Education. <<http://www.nayre.org/six%20questions.html>>.

⁵ "Educational Wiki: Year-Round Schools." Curriculum, Technology, & Education Reform. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. <http://wik.ed.uiuc.edu/index.php/main_page>.

⁶ "Year Round Calendar issues." Coalition For a Traditional School Year. Coalition For a Traditional School Year. <http://www.schoolyear.info/iss_yearround.html>.

Current Statistics and Trends

National Statistics

In the fall of 2007, 62.9 million students were enrolled in elementary and secondary schools across the country.⁷ Of those, over 2 million students in 3,000 schools in 46 states attended school year-round.⁸ These numbers include both public and private schools.

Year-Round Schools in Iowa

During the 2005-2006 school year, nearly 500,000 students were enrolled in approximately 1,500 elementary and secondary schools in Iowa.⁹ Of these, nearly 7,000 students in 18 schools across the state attended school year-round. In Iowa, all year-round schools are public.¹⁰

Year-Round Schools in the Midwest

A comparison of the number of year-round schools in Iowa and surrounding states is provided in the table below.

Figure 2¹¹¹²¹³

	Total Schools (Private and Public)	Total Year- Round Schools (Private)	Total Year- Round Schools (Public)	Approximate Percent of Year- Round Schools
Iowa	1,519	0	18	1.2%
Illinois	4,434	3	65	1.5%
Minnesota	2,759	3	23	1%
Missouri	2,361	6	14	1%
Nebraska	1,225	0	4	<1%
South Dakota	725	0	1	<1%

⁷ "Digest of Education Statistics: 2007." National Center for Education Statistics.

<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d07/tables/dt07_001.asp?referrer=report>

⁸ "Statistical Summaries of Year-Round Education Programs: 2006-2007." National Association for Year-Round Schools. <<http://www.nayre.org/STATISTICAL%20SUMMARIES%20OF%20YRE%202007.pdf>>

⁹ "State Education Data Profiles: Iowa." National Center for Education Statistics.

<<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/stateprofiles/sresult.asp?mode=full&displaycat=1&s1=19>>

¹⁰ "Statistical Summaries by State: 2006-2007." National Association for Year-Round Schools.

<<http://www.nayre.org/07%20SUMMARIES%20BY%20STATE.pdf>>

¹¹ "State Education Data Profiles." National Center for Education Statistics.

<<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/stateprofiles/>>

¹² "Number of Public, Charter and Private Schools with Year-Round Programs." National Center for Education Statistics, <<http://www.nayre.org/SchoolsbyState.html>>

¹³ Statistical Summaries by State: 2006-2007.

Current Trends

I PRO researchers found little data to suggest whether year-round schools are on the rise or decline. One source, Education World, an online resource for administrators and teachers, suggested that the number of schools adopting year-round calendars is balanced by the number of schools reverting back to traditional calendars. While there has been an increase in year-round schools in fast-growing districts in order to accommodate more students, there are a similar number of schools switching back to long summer vacations, often citing the summer heat and poor building conditions.¹⁴

¹⁴ “Is Year-Round Schooling the Answer?” Education World.
<http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin137.shtml>